QUALITY PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR YOUTH MENTORING





Program Self-Assessment Checklist

The Mentor Michigan Quality Program Standards for Youth Mentoring were developed to assist Michigan's mentoring programs in operating with the highest possible quality. The Standards are in place in order for youth to receive the most beneficial and productive results from a mentoring relationship.

The Standards are not meant to certify or accredit mentoring programs. They provide a planning and assessment framework that can assist new programs with their efforts to design and implement the best possible youth mentoring program. These Standards also "raise the bar" for existing mentoring programs and will assist programs in their continuous improvement efforts. They provide a basis for programs (board, staff, and other constituents) to make a conscious comparison of existing structures and determine how to improve to best meet the needs of youth and families in the identified service area.

The purpose of this checklist is to provide youth mentoring programs with a tool for self-assessment. As programs work to continually improve their operations and services to the communities they serve, this checklist can provide benchmarks for progress. Programs should use this instrument to determine areas of potential improvement needed and also to identify those components of quality youth mentoring that are strengths of the organization.

This checklist is meant to be used on the program level, not for the entire organization.

Standard 1: DEFINITION OF YOUTH MENTORING

The program defines mentoring as an ongoing, structured relationship with a trusted individual aimed at developing the competence and potential of the mentee.

			CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
То М	eet the	Stanc	dard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes	No □	N/A	A. Community-based mentoring programs provide for consistent contact between mentors and mentees for a minimum of one calendar year. Meetings must occur several times each month for a minimum of four (4) hours per month	A. For community-based mentoring program: O Mentors and mentees meet for one calendar year minimum. O Match meetings occur several times each month for a minimum of four (4) hours per month.
Yes	No	N/A	B. School-based mentoring programs provide for weekly contact between mentors and mentees that lasts for a minimum of one academic year.	B. For school-based/site-based mentoring programs: O Mentors and mentees have contact weekly. O Matches last for minimum of one academic year.
Yes	No □	N/A	C. A ratio of mentees to mentors of no more than 4:1 for group mentoring, which includes a consistent relationship between the one mentor and the same four mentees.	C. Group mentoring program models should also: Maintain a ratio of no more than 4:1 mentees to mentor. Ensure a consistent relationship exists between one mentor and the same four mentees. *Site-based mentoring can occur at a church, community center, etc. *Group mentoring can occur in either community-based, school-based, or site-based mentoring programs.

Standard 2: RECRUITMENT PLAN

The program has a comprehensive recruitment plan for mentors and mentees.

The program also has a system for timely mentor and mentee follow-up and enrollment.

				CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
То М	eet the	e Stand	lard:		To Meet the Standard:
Yes	No □		A.	Strategies that portray accurate expectations, eligibility, and benefits for mentors and mentees.	 A. Written policy defines timeline for defining timely mentor/mentee follow up and enrollment. Written policies on youth and mentor eligibility including program requirements.
Yes	No		B.	Year-round marketing and public relations for mentor recruitment.	 B. Written year-round marketing plan exists and is followed.
Yes	No		C.	Targeted outreach of mentors and mentees based on program objectives and participant needs.	 C. O Documentation that target audience(s) is identified in program planning process. O Marketing materials are targeted to an identified audience.
Yes	No		D.	Clearly stated program goals and objectives.	D.O Written program overview that contains clearly stated goals and objectives.
Yes	No		E.	A written position description outlining roles and responsibilities.	E.O Written position description for mentors.O Written responsibilities description for mentees.
Yes	No	N/A	F.	Volunteer opportunities beyond mentoring available within the organization (i.e., special events, fundraising, outreach, office support, committees, etc.).	 F. O Written volunteer position description for service roles other than direct mentoring.

Standard 3: ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

The program screens mentors and mentees for eligibility.

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
To Meet the Standard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes No A. For Mentees: 1. A written application, which is reviewed by trained staff or volunteers. 2. Parent/guardian written permission. 3. A face-to-face interview between trained staff or volunteer with the youth and family is highly recommended.	 A. For Mentees: O Documented review by staff/trained volunteer of all applications for eligibility and acceptance. O Utilize mentee screening procedure, including: O Parent/Guardian Permission Form. O Written Mentee application.
B. For Mentors: 1. A written application, which is reviewed by trained staff or volunteers. 2. A face-to-face interview with trained staff or volunteer is highly recommended. 3. Reference checks (personal/professional). 4. A background check which includes: a. State criminal history check by fingerprint (ideal) or name. b. Driving record check and proof of insurance for mentors transporting youth. c. Sex offender registry check. 5. The following checks are strongly recommended: a. Child abuse registry check. b. Local criminal history check. c. Federal criminal history check. c. Federal criminal history fingerprint check. 6. Organization has a process for rescreening existing volunteers on a regular basis. 7. Suitability criteria that relates to the needs of the target mentee population and the program's statement of purpose. This could include some or all of following: personality profile, skill identification, gender, age, language and racial requirements, level of education, career interest, motivation for volunteering, and academic standing. 8. Agreement to complete training and orientation and meet program expectations.	 B. For Mentors: Formal selection process is utilized for adult and youth mentor selection, including: Written application. Face-to-face interview. State criminal background check (adult applicants). Driving record check and proof of insurance for those mentors transporting mentees. Reference checks. Sex offender registry check. Orientation and training session(s) attended by applicants. Mentor Agreement Form signed by each accepted mentor and on file. Process for rescreening existing volunteers on regular basis or as prescribed by law. Staff/trained volunteer reviews all applications for eligibility and acceptance. Signed agreement to complete orientation and training requirements and meet program expectations. Child abuse registry check conducted. Local criminal background check conducted on prospective adult volunteers. Federal criminal background fingerprint check conducted on prospective adult volunteers. Matching criteria are documented and utilized to help ensure successful match based on identified criteria.
Yes No N/A C. If the program uses youth mentors: 1. Application process that includes a parental consent form. 2. Face-to-face interview. 3. Reference checks of at least two personal nonrelated adults (one from school staff and one person external to school). 4. Agreement to complete training and orientation and meet program expectations.	 C. For Youth Mentors: Written application. Signed parental consent form for youth mentors. Face-to-face interview. Reference checks. Signed agreement to complete orientation and training requirements and meet program expectations.
Yes No D. Mentor and mentee applications and all relevant data are reviewed for eligibility and acceptance.	 D. For Mentees: Face-to-face interviews conducted with prospective mentees and families.

Standard 4: ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

The program provides each mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian of mentee with orientation, training, and supporting materials. Trained staff or volunteers conduct these sessions, which are held prior to the match.

		CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
ТоМ	leet th	e Standard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes	No	 A. The program orientation for mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian clearly outlines the programs and includes the following formation: Program overview. Program description. Description of mentor and mentee eligibility and time commitment. Program benefits and rewards. 	 A. O Documentation (written or electronic) of orientation for prospective mentees that consists of program overview, eligibility requirements, and program description, as well as time commitments and expectations of mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians. O Documentation (written or electronic) of orientation for prospective mentors which includes program overview, eligibility requirements, program description, time commitments, and program benefits and rewards.
Yes	No	 B. The program training, which takes place in one or multiple sessions lasting a minimum of two hours, includes: A summary of program policies. Description of roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Discussion regarding building a healthy mentoring relationship. Information referral and support services (e.g., libraries, tutoring labs, parks, etc.). Age appropriate activities for mentee skill development. Cross cultural and diversity awareness training including cultural sensitivity and appreciation. Child abuse reporting and recognition including youth safety issues. Crisis management and problem solving resources. Establishing appropriate boundaries. Guidelines regarding confidentiality, risk, and liability management. Communication skills. Explanation of site rules, as applicable. Match closure procedures. 	 B. Training program for prospective mentors is conducted that includes printed resources for the following topics: Program policies and procedures. Position description, responsibilities, and expectations of mentors. Building healthy mentoring relationships. Referral and support services available to assist mentors and matches. Age-appropriate activity suggestions. Diversity and cultural awareness and sensitivity. Recognizing and reporting potential child abuse. Crisis management and problem-solving resources. Establishing boundaries in the mentoring relationship. Guidelines regarding confidentiality, risk management, and liability issues. Effective communication. Match closure procedures. Reporting requirements. Site rules. Agenda/sign-in sheets from trainings.
Yes	No	C. Ongoing training sessions as necessary.	 C. Documentation of ongoing training could include: Agendas and/or handout materials. Calendars. Sign-in sheets. Case notes/staff logs. Email or telephone logs.
Yes	No	D. Ample opportunity for interaction with the assigned program staff.	 D. Staff logs of regular match support contact with mentoring matches (in person, email, and/or phone)

Standard 5: MATCHING STRATEGY

The program well-documented matching strategy.

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
To Meet the Standard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes No A. Is consistent with the program's statement of purpose.	 A. O Written matching strategy is consistent with program's statement of purpose.
Yes No B. Requires that the mentor and mentee meet regularly as defined by the program expectations.	B. Match agreement that defines expectations for regular mentor/mentee contact.
Yes No C. Has criteria for matches, including some or all of the following: gender, age, language requirements, availability, disabilities, youth needs, interests, preferences, life experience, and temperament.	C. O Documented matching criteria exists. O Matches are made according to documented matching criteria.
Yes No D. Includes signed statements of understanding that all involved parties (e.g., mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, program) agree to the conditions of the match and the mentoring relationship.	D.O Signed mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian agreements on file.
Yes No N/A B. Matches one trained mentor with no more than four youth for group mentoring.	E. For Group Mentoring Programs:O No more than four youth matched with one mentor.

Standard 6: MATCH MONITORING PROCESS

The program maintains a process that monitors and supports mentoring matches.

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
To Meet the Standard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes No A. Consistent communication between staff, mentors, and mentees.	A. O Evidence of regular communication between staff and mentors, staff and mentees, and mentors and mentees. Examples include face-to-face meetings, telephone or email logs, and/or newsletters.
Yes No B. Maintenance of a confidential file containing documentation of the application, screening staff follow-up and input on match, and mentor input on match.	
Yes No C. Input from mentee, mentor, family, community partners, and/or others significant in the mentee's life.	C. O Evidence of regular input from mentor, mentee, family members, community partners, and/or others on impact of mentoring program on mentee's life. This could include surveys, interview data, etc.
Yes No D. Management of grievances, boundaries, premature match closure, rematching, and interpersonal problem solving.	 D. O Documented procedures for managing grievances, boundary issues, premature match closures, rematching procedures, and interpersonal problem solving.
Yes No N/A B. Providing mentors of community-based programs with appropriate health forms, emergency contacts, and permission forms	 E. Completed health forms, permission slips, and emergency contact numbers are provided to mentors in community-based programs. Note: School-based/site-based mentoring programs should have a system in place to have access to confidential mentee health and emergency information during program hours.

Standard 7: MENTOR SUPPORT, RECOGNITION, AND RETENTIONThe program supports mentoring relationships, recognizes volunteers, and has strategies for volunteer retention.

		CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
To N	leet the S	tandard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes	No	A. A kick-off event held on a regular basis (e.g., annually, seasonally).	A. O Kick-off event announcements.
Yes	No	B. Ongoing recognition, appreciation activities, and celebration.	 B. Thank you/appreciation letters to mentors. Flyers from recognition events. Copies of certificates for mentor appreciation. Copies of volunteer award nominations.
Yes	No	C. Ongoing peer support groups for volunteers, participants, and others.	 C. Mentor/mentee match meeting agendas/outlines. Announcements/flyers for mentor support meetings and group match activities.
Yes	No	D. Ongoing training and development.	D.Training agenda/announcements for ongoing training opportunities.
Yes	No	E. Reflection on relevant issues.	 E. Mentor meeting agendas. Case notes documenting conversations between mentors and staff. Updates and information sharing for mentors on relevant mentoring topics, using a variety of communication media.
Yes	No	F. Relevant and timely information dissemination.	F. Copies of emails, newsletters, flyers, etc.
Yes	No	G. Making mentors aware of volunteer opportunities for mentors and mentees, such as "Make a Difference Day", Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, etc.	 G. O Copies of emails, newsletters, flyers, etc. O Calendar of events for social and educational activities planned for matches.
Yes	No	H. Providing networking opportunities for mentors with appropriate resource organizations.	 H. Updates and information on a variety of topics through a variety of communication vehicles. Calendars or newsletters documenting opportunities for mentors to meet with professionals from resource organizations.
Yes	No	Newsletters, annual reports, and other correspondence with mentors, mentees, supporters, and funders to share program accomplishments.	I. O Newsletters and annual reports.
Yes	No	Structured activities or processes to ease anxieties that may occur at match meetings.	 J. O Samples of forms, icebreakers, and activities that are used during match meetings.
Yes	No	K. Social gatherings for matches.	 K. Announcements for upcoming community activities sent to matches.

Standard 8: MATCH CLOSURE

The program has a process for effective match closure.

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
To Meet the Standard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes No A. Exit interviews, including efforts and outcomes, between: a. Mentee and staff. b. Mentor and staff. c. Mentor and mentee.	 A. O Written closure policy that includes a policy on appropriate future contacts between mentor and mentee and assistance in defining the process for achieving personal goals for mentees. O Documentation of exit interviews in mentor and mentee files.
Yes No B. Parent/guardian notification and communication, when applicable.	Documentation of notification to the parent/guardian of match closures.
Yes No C. A clearly stated written policy describing appropriate future contacts between mentor and mentee.	C. O Written policy describing appropriate future contacts between mentor and mentee.
Yes No D. Assistance in defining process for achieving personal goals for mentees.	D. O Documentation of conversation with mentee about future goals.
Yes No E. A process for re-engaging the volunteer as mentor or in other areas of the program.	E. O Documented plan for re-engaging volunteers as mentors or in other areas of the mentoring program.

Standard 9: PROGRAM EVALUATION

The program conducts an evaluation process, which includes both process and outcome evaluation.

			CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
То М	eet th	e S	tandard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes	No 🗀	A.	The process evaluation determines the overall effectiveness of the program including tracking program activities such as mentor and mentee recruitment, screening, orientation, placement, matching system, training, support, and mentor retention. Demographic information for mentors and mentees should be included.	 A. O Written documentation of evaluation plan that includes both process and outcome measures.
Yes	No 🔲	В.	Outcomes evaluation measures changes in the program participants. Outcome measures for youth should relate to positive youth development and track specific indicators such as school success, improvement in social skills, reduction in risk-taking behaviors, etc.	 B. Tracking tools to document program procedures. Evaluation tools that measure changes in program participants, relevant to identified program outcomes.
Yes	No	C.	. Based on evaluation findings, the program reflects and refines the program design and operation.	C.O Documented plan for incorporating evaluation data into future program planning and implementation.
Yes	No	D.	Evaluation findings are reported to key stakeholders within the program and the community.	D.O Written reports to key stakeholders containing results of evaluation.

Standard 10: ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT

The program has established organizational management practices and a prudent and reasonable rationale for staffing based on the program's statement of purpose and goals, needs of mentors and mentees, available community resources, staff and volunteer skill level, and ability to meet the Mentor Michigan Quality Program Standards.

		CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
То М	eet th	e Standard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes	No	A. Paid or volunteer staff with appropriate skills to complete necessary program functions.	A. O Resumes/vitae of all paid or volunteer staff on file.
Yes	No	B. Written position descriptions for all staff and volunteers.	B. Written position descriptions for all paid and volunteer staff on file.
Yes	No	C. Composition of personnel, volunteers, and program participants that reflects the diversity of the community, as appropriate for program effectiveness.	C. O Written demographic data that reflects the diversity of the community.
Yes	No	D. Written procedures and a fund development plan that allows for diversified resources to support and sustain the program.	D. O Written fund development plan for program on file.
Yes	No	E. Written eligibility requirements for program participants.	 E. O Written eligibility requirements for prospective mentors and mentees on file.
Yes	No	F. Registration with Mentor Michigan.	F. O Copy of Mentor Michigan registration on file.
Yes	No	G. A comprehensive system for managing program information including finances, personnel records, program activity, mentor/mentee matches, and program evaluation.	G. O Documented financial accountability policy on file for program.
Yes	No	H. A public relations and communication plan to educate the community, stakeholders, and other target markets about the need for mentoring and the value of the mentoring program. This plan includes mentor recruitment.	H. Written public relations and communications plan on file. Demographics of staff, board, and participants reflect the community being served and the stated program audience.

Standard 11: GOVERNANCE

The program has a governance structure that includes a volunteer (non-compensated) board of directors or advisory council with established governance practices.

	CRITERIA	POSSIBLE EVIDENCE
To Meet	the Standard:	To Meet the Standard:
Yes N		 A. O Written description of board member roles and responsibilities on file.
Yes N		B.O Written mission statement.O Written, current strategic plan that supports well-defined mission.
Yes N		C. O Written operating policy and organizational structure on file.
Yes N		 D. O Agency flow chart or other documentation that describes the program structure.
Yes N		 E. A written, current strategic planning document that includes community input.
Yes N		F. O Administrative and program policies and procedures handbook.
Yes N		G. O Proof of liability insurance coverage.
Yes N		H. O Written program budget.